

GLOUCESTER

The historic city of Gloucester is set in glorious Gloucestershire countryside on the banks of the River Severn. These waters are busy with motor cruisers and narrowboats and flow for 220 miles from Plynlimon, high in the Welsh mountains before finally emptying into the sea in the Bristol Channel.

The Gloucester and Sharpness Canal was once the broadest and deepest canal in the world and even now is a impressive feat of waterway engineering. The 16-mile waterway starts at the Historic Gloucester Docks and ends in the commercial port of Sharpness. The immense swing-bridges and ornate bridge-keepers' houses are unique to this canal.

The City of Gloucester has a unique history from its Roman foundations to its Victorian docklands. Gloucester is a vibrant multicultural city that combines historic architecture with a unique blend of visitor attractions. The city is overlooked by the Cotswolds Hills in the lush Severn Valley

The once derelict port of Gloucester Docks is now a vibrant retail, leisure and residential area. At times you can view the Tall Ships moored in the docks and the area will look familiar as the 'Onedin Line' was filmed here. Visit the collection of restored Victorian warehouses containing shops, museums, restaurants and café bars. During the summer months take a boat trip or a guided walk of the docks.

Set in Gloucester's Historic docks the National Waterways Museum tells the story and history behind 200 years of the inland waterways. Learn the workings of a lock chamber and explore hands on the displays of working engines. Watch blacksmiths at work and even sign up for a course yourself. Visit the café and gift shop or take a boat trip on the former Thames passenger boat *Queen Boadicea II*.

The Cathedral built in 1100 as a Norman abbey church is in the centre of Gloucester and boasts an impressive nave and Norman pillars. During the English Civil War in 1644 the Cathedral sustained minor damage and in 1649 the newly-established Parliament abolished the Dean and Chapter and made plans to tear down the Cathedral. The vaulted cloisters are now world famous because it was where some scenes of the Harry Potter films were filmed.

The children's novel *The Tailor of Gloucester* by Beatrix Potter was published in 1903 and tells the story of a group of mice helping a tailor finish his work in time for Christmas. Visit The House of the Tailor of Gloucester where this charming story is told.

Walk down narrow cobbled streets and past ancient buildings and into the main pedestrianised shopping area. Shopping is full of pleasant surprises as well as all the usual high street stores Gloucester also boasts a wide range of unique and fascinating specialist shops. Visit the market which is a great place to pick up a bargain and also has stalls selling traditional local produce such as the famous Gloucester sausage. The Docks area also has its own specialist shopping centre with very individual shops and the famous five storeys Antiques Centre.